

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 13417 120810Z

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ACTION COME-00

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R 120439Z DEC 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3157

UNCLAS HONG KONG 13417

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, HK

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT - HONG KONG SECOND DESALINATION PLANT

REF: STATE 245007

1. WOOTHORPE INFORMED POST TODAY THAT SITUATION HAS CHANGED CONCERNING HONG KONG'S NEED FOR EXTREMELY LARGE DESALINATION PLANT. FORMERLY, IT SEEMED NECESSARY TO HAVE PLANT WITH 50 MILLION GALLON PER DAY CAPACITY BECAUSE THERE WAS AN 8PERCENT PER ANNUAL INCREASE IN SUPPLY NEEDS AND LIMITS HAD BEEN REACHED WITH REGARD TO NEW CATCHMENT BASIN POSSIBILITIES AND SUPPLY FROM MAINLAND CHINA. IN PAST FEW WEEKS, HOWEVER, DEMAND PROJECTIONS HAVE BEEN REVISED DOWNWARD, A NEW CATCHMENT BASIN POSSIBILITY HAS BEEN DISCOVERED AND ADDITIONAL SUPPLY FROM MAINLAND CHINA HAS BEEN NEGOTIATED. ACCORDINGLY, HKG HAS BEEN ABLE TO DELAY DECISION ON DESALINATION PLANT TO 1976 AND DROP REQUIREMENT FOR 50 MILLION GAL. PER DAY PLANT.

2. WOOTHORPE DOES NOT WANT GENERAL PUBLICITY CONCERNING ABOVE. HOWEVER, HE STATES THAT COMMERCE SHOULD ANSWER SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FROM U.S. FIRMS AND INFORM AVCO THAT HKG WOULD WELCOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THEIR PROCESS AND THEIR CURRENT THINKING CONCERNING FEASIBILITY OF PLANT HAVING SIZE COMMENSURATE WITH AVCO'S STATE OF ART. WOOTHORPE CONTINUES TO SHOW CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN AVCO'S FREEZING PROCESS.

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PAGE 02 HONG K 13417 120810Z

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